
Bishop of *ROCHESTER*'s
SERMON
BEFORE
Their Majesties,
On *Good-Friday*, *April 6. 1694.*

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Spots*

SE R M O N

PRE A C H E D before the
King and Queen,
At *WHITE HALL*,
On *Good-Friday, April 6. 1694.*

By the L^d Bishop of *ROCHESTER*,
Dean of *WESTMINSTER*.

Published by Their Majesties Command.

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... and in ^{the} world to a people and
St. Matth. 7. 21.

*Not every one, that saith unto me, Lord, Lord,
shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but
he that doeth the will of my Father which is
in Heaven.*

Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt,
Not my will, but thine be done, were
the meek and tender words of entire
Resignation to the *Will* of his Heavenly Fa-
ther, which the great Saviour of the World
used, just after he had prayed, that this Days
bitter *Cup* might be removed from him; whilst
his soul was exceeding sorrowful even to death in
his dreadful Agony in the Garden; when he
was immediately entring on the severest part
of his Dolorous Passion, going to encounter
the utmost Rage of his Enemies, both Wick-
ed Men, and Devils, to endure the Denial and
Treachery of his Friends, nay the Accursed
Death of the Cross it self: and all this only
for our sakes; as *on him were laid the Iniqui-
ties of us all.*

Towards our right entertaining of which
inexpressible Love, endeared to us by so
many Circumstances of Mercy, increased by

so many degrees of Humility in him, and Unworthiness in us, and now so nearly approaching us in the very hour ; What is the best Preparation that we can make ? What the most beneficial Use of it ? What kind of Gratitude, though none can be equal to it, Yet what is fittest for us to return for it ? What is, or can it be other than this, that we also, on our part, should endeavour to do the will of his, and our Father which is in Heaven ?

*Isaiah 9.
6.*

To this purpose, if we will take the Advice of this Saviour himself ; And whose can we better take, either considering his Wisdom or Goodness ? For which his Name was Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace : If we will hearken to his Counsel, he frequently admonishes us, that it is this he expects from us, this he requires of us, for all he had done, and suffer'd for us ; which was so much, as would have been to any other, either Man, or Angel, insupportable.

Particularly here in my Text, he expressly tells us, that, for all this, he demands of us not only our saying to him Lord, our open professing of his Doctrine, though that without question ; nay, as we shall find, not only our believing him to be the Lord, the Great Messias,

Messias, tho' that too, and that much more than the other: but our serious submission to all his Divine Precepts; our sincere performing what he has injoin'd, and enabled us to perform, his holy, and just Commands; our crucifying what he has taught us to crucifie, our own Wills, and Lusts; our trusting, and not only our trusting to his Death, and Resurrection, but our *being made Conformable to them by dying to Sin, and rising to Newness of Life.* All which in other words is no more, nor no less, than our *doing the will of his Heavenly Father:* For this, says St. Paul, is the will of God, even ^{1 Thess. 4. 3.} *your sanctification.*

In the 6th of St. Luke, the like sense as this in my Text is express'd by way of Question, and Reproof; *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and vrs. 46. do not the things which I say?*

In which two Parallel Scriptures, first, that which is to be *done* is styled in St. Matthew, *the will of my Father*, in St. Luke, *the things which I say.* The terms indeed are different, but the meaning is the same. For did not our blessed Redeemer often assure us, that he only came to say, and to do the Will of his Father? Was not his coming, and living, and dying, and rising again in the Flesh, the effect of Gods secret Will from all Eternity? And his

his Teaching was the publication of God's reveal'd Will to Mankind.

2dly, In both places the same phrase, *saying to me, calling me, Lord, Lord*, is used, and repeated. By which is signified the most publick owning of Christianity; our acknowledging the truth of his Gospel; and (as the best Interpreters expound it) some kind of true belief in him too, as the Great *Lord of Heaven, and Earth*, and the only *Author, and Finisher of our Faith*.

3dly, That which he prefers before such a Profession, and such a Belief, he calls *Doing the will of my Father*, *Doing the things which I say*; that is, honestly, and heartily, without reserve, with earnest intention, and undissembled diligence, to practise the Commands of Christ, as the *Sayings* of the most Divine Law-giver, and as the *Will* of God himself.

According to which explanation of these words, the whole substance of both Texts may be contained in one general proposition.

That in order to our being the true Disciples of Christ; to our partaking the great fruit of his death, and intercession, which is the *Kingdom of Heaven*; 'tis not enough, that we constantly profess his Religion, nor that we steadfastly believe it to be true; unless to a

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steddy Profession, to a Faith unfeigned, we add a conscientious obedience to his Laws.

Now towards our right understanding the full importance of this weighty Truth, and applying it to our own Hearts, and Consciences, be pleased that I draw it into three particular Conclusions.

First, That our outward profession of the Faith, *our saying to*, and *calling Christ Lord*, was not in the least reprehended in these words, but only compared, and made inferior to something else, that is of greater concernment in Religion; our *Doing the Will of his Father*.

2dly, That it is possible for our Saviours Followers, in some sense, to *do the Will of God*; in some such sense, as shall be accepted of God himself, and by him rewarded, in the Kingdom of Heaven, with that *Life, and Immortality, which was brought to light in the Gospel*, the Doctrine of that Kingdom.

3dly, That it is not only possible, but absolutely necessary for all Christians, not only to call on Christ's Name, not only to assent to, and believe his Doctrine, but to *do the will of God, and the things our Saviour hath said*: The *doing those things* being that alone, which can make us Christians not only in Name, but in Deed.

First

First then, the reason, and purport of the Negative part of my Text, is rightly to be stated. *Not every one that says unto me Lord; Why call ye me Lord?* It was not here objected against any of our Lords Hearers, as a fault, that they solemnly owned his Doctrine, and declared themselves Believers of it; That could not be; But the case was thus:

Our Blessed Saviour, in all his Precepts, so earnestly endeavoured to free the World from a Pharisaical Religion, to persuade Men to an uncounterfeit Holiness; that oftentimes, in comparison to this, he seemed to undervalue, and to speak somewhat slightly of the outward forms, and shews of Religion: whereby he did never intend to condemn any of the External expressions of Godliness, but only to give the internal sincerity a due place, and preference before them, as undoubtedly it deserves.

Thus he says, *Wo to you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye make clean the outside of the Cup, and of the Platter.* The Wo is not denounced against their washing the outside, but their outward Hypocritical cleanliness; whilst they defiled the inside, *within they were full of extortion, and excess:* else their cleansing the outside had been allowable, nay very commendable.

Let

Let none be deceived : A Decency, and Purity of Life, and a Comeliness of Worship, as it was all along enjoined in the Law, so it was far from being forbidden, or threatened ; but it was always enjoined too in the Gospel. Our most *Holy Religion* is also *pure* and *undefiled* : The visible Solemnity of its most Spiritual Offices in Publick Worship, was here frequently encouraged, never reproved, but only Mens resting in that alone. 'Tis true, without reality, all Ceremony is Hypocrisie : but with reality, a well-moderated Ceremony is the Ornament of Devotion, as inward Affection is the Life of it.

Thus also our Saviour says, *Wo to you, Scribes, and Pharisees, Hypocrites ; For ye pay Tithe of Mint, and Anise, and Cumin.* The Curse is not levelled against their most punctual observance of these small things ; but their neglecting the Great. He adds, *These things ye ought to have done, yet not to leave the other undone* : that is, to have done them both, but not both with an equal Zeal, and Application. The exception is made against Mens pleading their earnestness, and exactness in things of less moment, for their excuse, for their praise, when they omitted the weightier things of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith.

Thus likewise our Lord repeats and confirms what God, by the Prophet, had said before ; *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice.*
St. Mat. 9. 13.
Hos. 6. 6. And not Sacrifice ! What will not God accept of Sacrifice ? Did not he prescribe to the Jews every part, and circumstance of their Sacrifices ? And does he not now expect from us, not only a Spiritual, but a Bodily Worship to succeed in their place ? Does he require Mercy, and despise Worship ? No ; He only refuses that Worship, where Mercy is wanting : When Religion is made the pretence, or cover of Rapine, Cruelty, or Sacrilege : When either the observance, or forbearance of some particular Temporary Institutions of it is made destructive to the great Law of Charity ; which is of Universal, and Eternal Obligation.

And by this Measure we are to Interpret my Text. *Not every one that says unto me Lord : Why call ye me Lord ?* What could be their offence in so saying, and so calling him ? Were they not all bound to call him so ? Does not our Lord himself ; who Loved, and practised Promising, and Blessing far more than Threatning, and Cursing ; Yet, Does not he threaten, that he will leave them under the most heavy Curse, who shall deny him, or

or be ashamed of him and his words before Men? St. Mark 8. 38.
He will deny them, and be ashamed of them, St. Luk. 9. 26.
when he shall come in his own Glory, and in his Fathers, and of the Holy Angels.

It cannot therefore be the Professing of Christianity, but the bare Professing it, and Mens Contradicting that Profession in their Works, that is here censur'd. Our Saviour regards not our *calling* him *Lord*, except we will submit to his Dominion ; commands us not to give him that Majestick Title in empty Compliment, but to obey his Authority as *our Lord* ; not by calling our selves Christians, his holy and elect Children, and yet living unsuitable, ungodly Lives, to discredit his Faith : but to undergo the great Obligations of Christians ; and so to let his Faith have the Credit, as most certainly it has in it self the Power, of amending our Lives.

For he wisely, and divinely foresaw, that more Dishonour was like to redound to his excellent Religion, by the wicked, and vicious Practises of its counterfeit Friends, than from all the most malicious Objections of its open, and declared Enemies. We know, the Gospel irresistibly prevailed of old, above the Jewish Shadows, and Traditions, against the Heathen Wisdom and Empire. And still we

need not fear what the Jewish, or Heathen; or Mahometan World could do, or devise against the *Power of Godliness*; if there were more *Power of Godliness* in the Christian World. Christianity is for ever invincible from without: It is only in danger from within, of being weaken'd, and undermined by the Looseness and Treachery of its own Members.

Alas! has not the Christian Church always run the greatest Hazards from Men, who pretend to its Communion; from the Dissentions, the Animosities, the Schisms, the corrupt Opinions, and Conversations of Christians? As Christ himself was betray'd by one, who dip't with him in the same Dish, who *kissed him, and called him Lord and Master.*

Wherefore to forewarn us of this, was his chief intention in this, and other the like Scriptures, so that from his questioning them, *Why they call'd him Lord, and did not what he said.* We are only to learn, which of these he prefer'd before the other; not to conclude that he rejected the ^{either} other. Our *calling him Lord,* our dutiful acknowledging of his Faith, he did never reject, but always require. We are obliged to *call him Lord,* if we believe him to be so. We must bear, and appear to others to bear his Crofs, if we will have any share in his

his Kingdom. 'Tis true, from the emptiness of the Heart, the Mouth may sound: and sometimes perhaps the louder, because of that emptiness. But yet out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth will, and must speak. I grant there may be, and, God knows, too often is an outward Profession, where there is no inward Belief. But where-ever there is an inward Belief, there will be an outward Profession; there should be a manifest Declaration of that Belief, by such a Worship, and Devotion, such a reasonable Service, that, in the Visible, as well as Invisible Part of it, becomes Men, rational Creatures, to offer up to God; and such also as is fit for God to receive, who is *a God of Order, and not of Confusion.*

That is my First Particular; *Our saying to, our calling Christ, Lord,* is expected, and commanded. Only it is of less efficacy to Salvation, than our *doing the Will of his Father.*

And may we not hence, in passing, recollect, that if our gracious and merciful Lord himself did so severely reprove all those Professors of his Faith, who, though they readily called him Lord, and ranked themselves in the Number of his Disciples; yet went not on to live, and act, as became that Holy Profession, to which they had given up their Names:

What.

What Opinion then must our Saviour have, what Judgment will he pass at the last Day, on all those his seeming Followers, who go not so far in the Ways of God, and Goodness, as they did, whom he so sharply here reprehended, and, in a manner, rejected? If he Cursed the Fig-Tree, that bore no Fruit, and Condemned it never to bear Fruit more: what will he say to them, who bear not so much as Leaves?

What shall become of them, who, whilst they scruple not to boast their being Christians, yet are so far from minding to *do what Christ has said*, that they seldom, or never seriously *call him Lord*? If the most diligent and assiduous attending on the Publick, and Private Service of God, will not save us alone; What Hope then can they have, what Blessing can they expect, who are notoriously defective even in that? What Condemnation must they deserve, who come short in that very Duty, which, at best, by it self, comes short of Salvation? except it be accompanied with our *doing the Will of our Heavenly Father*.

And what is this *Will of God* to be *done* by us? You have heard, it is the same with *the things our Saviour has said*. That is, in short, It is the perfect Rule prescribed us in his Word, concerning

concerning our Behaviour towards God, our Selves, and other Men ; comprehending all his Precepts of Manners and Piety ; those new Evangelical Commands, which he himself introduced ; those Moral Laws, which he confirmed ; those natural Laws, which he continued ; yea, he advanced, and heightned both these Last, and incorporated them into the Gospel : which therefore is altogether a Doctrine so universal, that it omits not any the least Religious Duty ; so Holy, that it admits not of any the least Mixture of Sin.

This is the Will of God, These the things our Saviour has said. But how shall I now make good my second Inference ? How is it possible for us to do all this ?

Alas ! they, that seriously study, and truly know their own Hearts, must needs confess, that they cannot do it. And they that neither know, nor study their own Hearts, have not they far more reason to confess, that they cannot ? Alas ! the Impenitent never regard the Performance of it ; and are not the most Penitent, even by being so, conscious to themselves of the Breach of it ?

Could the doing of all this have been within the power of our own Nature ? No. That will rather retard, and overthrow, than promote

mote the doing of these things. From our Nature, as it is, Corrupted, we may rather look for the violation of every one, than the accurate Practise of all the Christian Rules. From Humane Nature, as it should and might be of it self, corrected by good Education, and Discipline, ennobled by the Principles of Prudence and Virtue, and Honor; even thus we could only expect at most the doing what it self teaches, never what a higher, Supernatural Law-giver commands.

Can any Man therefore stand before a Judge so Righteous? Can any Creature be clear in the sight of God, who ~~cannot~~ but discover the least Iniquity; and yet *cannot endure to behold any?* Must we not all yield, that if *not the bearers of the Law, but the doers of it shall be justified*, none shall be justified? That if the *calling* our Saviour *Lord* be too little for us to do, the *doing what he says* is far too much for us to undertake?

In this deplorable distress, which way should we have turned our selves? To what can we have recourse for Assistance? To what, but to the Gracious Favour, the boundless Mercies of the same Saviour? His bloody Sweat, his pierced Hands, his wounded Side, his dying Heart, his meritorious Death? That only

only is able to make this difficult Work possible : And if we will contribute our Part, our very little Part, and of it self very inconsiderable, however then it will make this Work, not only possible, but easie.

Be pleased then to take this along with you, that our *doing* what our Saviour has said, that is, the whole *Will* of God, may be either tryed by the Dispensation of the Law, or the Gospel.

The Legal Rule of old, exacted an entire Perfection in every Part of Mens Practise : Which it is Rashness for any Man, on his own single Strength to attempt, impossible to effect. The Evangelical Rule requires the doing what we do, with Integrity ; and the doing it not by any Trust in our own Sufficiency, but in the Succour of the Divine Power, and inestimable Love. Let but the Sense that we have done Ill, and the Striving to do Well be our own ; though not properly our own neither, but in a Gospel Sense our own ; and then the well doing will be superadded by the Favour of God himself.

And here is the great Distinction between the First Covenant, and the Second. In the First Covenant, that of Works, Mankind was for it self, by it self to obey all the Laws of

its Maker ; and was to expect no Reward, but on such a compleat Obedience, and so inex-
cusably failed, and deserved the Punishment of
that Failure.

In the Second Covenant, this of Grace
we do not alone attempt the hazardous Work :
But we have a Mediator to bear our Sins ;
[REDACTED] to supply us with Divine Grace.
We are here too to take upon us, but not a-
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persist in the Endeavor with unwearied Perse-
verance, then that God, who would have
been the Punisher of what we break, or neg-
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what we perform, that God is as it were join-
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abilities, to pass by our Omissions, to pardon
our Transgressions.

How then can we ever be able sufficiently to
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us

us in a New and far different way, in a less-terrible, in the most comfortable Appearance.

By this merciful Standard, he is judged to do all the Will of God, equivalent to all, who does what he does with an upright Heart, who unfeignedly strives to do more, and when he does most, is heartily grieved he does so little. Here a true Repentance passes for Performance, and will grow up to it: A sincere Performance is taken for Perfection, and will end in it. The Deed is commanded: But the Will is often accepted, for the Deed, by him, who both makes us to Will, and to Do of his good Pleasure.

Under the Law, the Task was rigorously exacted: but far less Provision made for Help to aid, or Strength to sustain, or Reward to encourage the Doers of it. Under the Gospel much more is to be done, many new Commands are imposed: Yet the Work it self is much more feasible: If we will Labour in good earnest, our Infirmities will be supported, our Temptations brought within compass, our Sins forgiven, our Spiritual Enemies overcome, and Heavenly Grace bestowed upon us by him, whose Grace is sufficient for us to attain all that we can by blisom.

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How then can we ever be able sufficiently to
Ephes. 3. 18. Admire, how to Comprehend with all Saints, what is the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height ; and to know the Love of Christ, which passeth Knowledge ? According to this happy Design of the Gospel, the whole Summ of God's Laws, and of our Obedience, is represented to us

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Esa. 53.
5.

There the greatest Righteousness, that Men, of themselves could attain to, was deficient. Here indeed the greatest Righteousness of our own is not meritorious: Yet the least shall be rewarded, if pure and unfeigned, and *sprinkled with the Blood of the immaculate Lamb.* That Lamb of God has taken on himself our Offences; and will impute to us his own Merits: To bring about which happy Exchange, it is he only, not we, that has suffered. *By his Stripes we are healed, the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him.* He was punished for what we do ill; and what we do well, we do it not, but *Christ that strengthens us:* Yet not he, but we alone shall receive the Recompence of what he enables us to do.

Thus by the wonderful Compassion, the unspeakable Condescension of God himself, you see, 'tis possible for us frail, and sinful Creatures, *to do the Will of God, and the things our Saviour has said.*

But what immediately follows upon this? Certainly that it is not only possible, but unavoidably necessary for us all *to do those things.* And seeing our Duty appears to be so possible, we ought the more to be convinced of the Necessity of it; least the Craft of the Devil, and the ill Inclinations of our own Hearts, should

should make use of this Possibility, not as an Argument to incourage our Industry, and Watchfulness over our own Hearts and Lives, but to increase our Negligence, and Spiritual Pride; for too many have turned *the Grace of God it self into Lasciviousness*. Jude 4.

Wherefore as the Possibility of doing this may justly serve to prevent our Despair, and to raise our Hopes, so the Necessity of our doing it may well keep us from Carelessness, or Arrogance. And ought not the joint Consideration both of the Possibility and Necessity to excite our utmost Endeavours, not only in the Belief, but in the Practise of Religion? This being, not as some have esteemed it, only a Legal, but the true Evangelical way to Heaven.

I doubt not but you are sensible on what dangerous and slippery Ground I am now walking. You cannot be ignorant, that, as the several Parties, and Divisions of *Christendom*, for their own private Interests, not for the Benefit of the whole Christian Church, have disordered the great Doctrines of Faith and Works, it is very difficult to speak of them without some Offence, without falling into some one or other of the Snares that have been laid in these Paths, which should have been

been the least Intricate, the most Direct, the smoothest Paths to Eternal Life.

Is there any one Article of Religion, that ought to have been freer from the Devices, and cross Inventions of Men? That ought to have been delivered more plainly and simply, and entertained with less Dispute, than the great fundamental Truth, of the good Agreement, and Correspondence of Belief, and Practise towards Salvation? And yet there is scarce any one of all the Doctrines of Christ, wherein the Fancies of Men have been more Luxuriant, and their Opinions more Contradictory and Perplexed. Scarce in any one other Point could our Dissentions have been more hazardous: Yet in no other, that I know of, have Christians more dissented among themselves; and that almost in every Communion.

To repair these Breaches, to restore Unity to all *Christendom* in these Questions, is above the reach of the highest Understanding, beyond the Ability of the largest Charity. That can only now be the Subject of our Wishes and Prayers, but not of our Hopes, on any ground of Human Probability.

However, thus far we of this Church have reason to bless, and praise Almighty God, that from

from the very beginning of the Reformation, it was by him at first directed, and has ever since continued in the most Temperate, and therefore Orthodox Judgment, in these weighty Points; whereof the very weight, unduly Poized, has carried too many others to the one, or the other extreme.

And though there be very many Proofs, yet there can be none greater, of the Christian Moderation, the truly Catholick Charity, the Divine Assistance, by which our Church has been ever since Guided to this very day, than that it has been able to avoid all those fatal Rocks, on all sides of it, in these Controversies, on which so many of its Adversaries have splitted; either, on the one side, by extolling Works to the obscuring of Grace, and the weakning of Faith by Merit; or, on the other, by advancing an idle arrogant Faith, and thinking too meanly of all manner of Morality, in a pretended fear of placing Merit in good Works, but indeed, in a real fear of going to the Pains and Charge of them.

But our Church, according to its usual Temper in all other Points of Religion, judging from the uniform Voice of the Scripture, and the Consent of uncorrupt Antiquity, not from any present heat of false Inspiration, or prospect

prospect of Secular Profit, or Interest, in this also has held the Scales with so even a Hand, as to allow both to Faith, and Works their full due, without suffering them to invade each others Province; and having once determined on the right way, and purpose of using and applying both, as it has thenceforth, it is never jealous of any ill Effects, which the largest Measures either of our Belief, or Practise can produce.

Now then, according to the Excellent Instruction of so sure a Guide, my third and last particular is to make out the necessary Obligations we all lie under, not only to believe the Doctrinal, but to do the Practical Things of Religion.

First, indeed, I must again repeat that, which can never be too frequently inculcated on our Memories, as being the most certain, the only Foundation of this whole Doctrine; that neither our strongest, our truest Belief in our Saviours Word, or Merits, nor our most compleat doing his Will, and Sayings, are of themselves able to save us, as they proceed from us, as they are the Thoughts, or Actions of our own Minds, or Hearts, or Hands, but only as they are Sanctified by his Death, and wrought by his Holy Spirit in us.

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This seems to be undeniably manifest from the whole Tenor of the Gospel, which very frequently declares, That only the Price of his most Precious Blood, and the Imputation of his Unvaluable Righteousness, can Atone for the best of our Thoughts and Deeds, and make them acceptable ; nay, even tolerable in the sight of God.

Far be it then from us to imagine, that our Salvation can be deserved by our selves ; that any degree of our Faith, or Hope, or Charity, can of it self, for its own Value, be effectual to so high an end. Eternal Life, in the Kingdom of Heavens, is due to neither of them on their own account, as a Reward, which they have any right of themselves to challenge, but only as it was Purchased for us by God the Son, and therefore Promised by God the Father.

It is that Promise of God the Father, founded on his Sons Mediation and Satisfaction, which alone can give us assurance to lay hold on the Mercy of God. That, indeed, goes much farther, gives us boldness even to Appeal to his Justice, and, upon some terms, to claim our Salvation from it. But without that Purchase of the Son, and Promise of the Father, Gods very Mercy were an unap-

E proachable.

proachable, his Justice were a terrible Attribute ; without that Purchase, and that Promise, his Mercy it self could not be for us ; his Justice would have been directly against us ; without them, our best Works were but polluted Imperfections ; our firmest Faith were but a groundless Presumption.

But now, Secondly, it may be safely add'd, That although neither our believing aright, nor our doing well, are of themselves sufficient, as they come from us, yet as they are both hallowed, and presented to God by him, who is *our great High Priest*, so considered, they are both effectual, and both of absolute necessity to Salvation.

They are both, I say, necessary. How, in what manner, or to what degree, it is hard to define : But the main Truth it self should be fixed, and unquestionable, that they are both necessary. And it is in this case as in all other Religious Matters, from the main Truth it self, not from any Nice, or Subtil Speculation of the manner of it, that the great benefit will arise to our Souls, to help our Unbelief, to animate our Diligence.

That Faith is necessary, I need not here spend time in proving ; this Truth, among us, being confess'd by all. The great doubt has been

been concerning the Practical Effects of Faith; most of those, who deny them to be necessary, fancying that they cannot be so, but only on the account of Merit. And there lyes the Error: For the Works of Piety, and Charity, may be, and are many ways necessary, yet not in the least Meritorious.

They are not only necessary to a Christian Life, for the Benefit of Mankind in general, for the Conviction of Gain-sayers, for the Conversion of the prophane World, for the Honor of the Gospel, *that men seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in Heaven*; but they are necessary, as the only signs to distinguish the true Faith from the False; and as Productions that Infallibly will grow upon the True. They are not only necessary, as the means, and matter of our Sanctification, but as the indispensable condition, though not the cause, of our Justification. A condition, I say, on our parts, which is therefore indispensable, because required of us by the positive, and frequent Commands of our Blessed Saviour, who, unquestionably, had power to impose what terms he pleased, on that Salvation, which he alone was to bestow, and had bought at so dear a Rate.

St. Matt.
5. 16.

For these, and other such Reasons, our *doing the Will* of God, and our Obedience to our Lords Precepts, is necessary, without any the least thought of Meriting by it, or without being in the least apt to incline Men to think so, if all this be Evangelically done. Let us but *do* what Christ and his Heavenly Father have enjoined us, in a right manner, to a right end, and the whole design of the Gospel will Absolve us from any danger of intruding; will free us from any desire to intrude on his All-sufficient Satisfaction: Nay, rather quite the contrary.

They who shall obey Gods Laws, in the way that he has traced out, will be so far from presuming they can thereby deserve any thing, much more from thinking they can supererogate, that they are the only Men rightly disposed to distrust themselves, and to be deeply sensible they can never do enough. None but good Works, falsely good, arrogantly done, singly relied on, can provoke Men to a Proud, over-weening Confidence of Merit; and so Men may Err the same way, in respect of Faith it self. There may be an excess in trusting to the single Interest, and Operation of some kind of Faith, as much as in confiding in the single efficacy, or deserts of any kind of good Work.

Thirdly,

Thirdly; Therefore as a Belief in the Divine Truths, and a Practical Obedience to the Divine Laws, may both be equally abused, and yet are in themselves both necessary when they are not abused ; so they are not only both necessary, but they do not in the least cross, or hinder, they mutually assist, and promote each other ; indeed, they are both always inseparable.

And the Method of the great Mystery of our Redemption will make this apparent, our Lord Christ did pay a Ransom equal to the Sins of the whole World : None can enjoy the benefit of that Ransom, unless they apprehend it by a lively Faith. No Faith can be lively, except it *work by Love*, except it be Active, and growing in a Charitable, and Holy Life.

And thus all might be reconciled. Christ is the only Author of our Salvation : Faith is the principal Instrument, as I may call it, of conveying it to us. Works are the certain Consequences, the Evidences, the Life, the Consummation of a Saving Faith.

I say it again : Had it not been for the Propitiatory Death of the great Messias, there had been no Salvation for any Man. *His is the only saving name under Heaven* ; without my Faith to lay hold on that Propitiation, there

there will be no Salvation for me : without my Living answerably, my Faith were dead, and useless. If there were no Mediator between God, and Man, there could be no Ground for our Hopes to grow upon. If there be no Faith, there can be no Root of our Hopes. If there be no good Life, there will be no Fruit of them. And let us all beware. For in the Words immediately before my Text, our Saviour lays this down, as the only distinguishing Character, between his genuine Disciples, and Hypocrites, *By their Fruits ye shall know them.*

The Conclusion of the whole Matter is this. That is the only fixed, thriving, saving Religion, where neither of these is wanting. A true Christian Faith, and true Christian Works do not only well agree ; but cannot indeed disagree. From that Faith which is defective towards our justification, Works may be distinguished, they may be divided ; and that Division makes the Defect. But of that Faith which is sufficient, Works are a very material Part ; they seem to be the Last, the Finishing Part, the very Perfection of it in this World.

This is the old, secure, certain Method of Salvation ; This the only direct, unerring Way to Heaven ; This the Doctrine, which with one

one Voice, and one Consent, our Church teaches and professes. This Doctrine let us profess: But let us not only profess it. Let us not fatally mistake in placing our eternal Safety on either of these things separated, which can only be efficacious, when they are united.

See, I pray, how exactly in all these Particulars, the Author to the *Hebrews* has described the whole Compass of our Duty in this respect. *Let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering.* ^{Heb. 10.} There is our Professing, and Believing him to be the Lord. *Let us consider one another to provoke unto Love, and to good Works.* ^{v. 23.} There is our Doing, and our careful Endeavors that others should do *the Will of God*; by Love, and good Works; which (if I might be allowed) I would venture to call the very Will of the Will of God, in relation to our Practise towards Men.

And after all, he adds, that we should *not* ^{v. 25.} *forsake the Assembling our selves together*; in order still to call him Lord.

Such are the regular Steps that lead us in the Way to Life and Happiness. Works must proceed from Faith. Faith must come by hearing, hearing the Word of God: the Word of God, either as it is spoken from God to the People, in the Churches teaching whereby our Saviour is declared to be the Lord; or spo-

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ken to God again by the People in the Churches Prayers, wherein he is owned to be so !

Thus then let us acknowledge our Lord's Redemption openly, and chearfully, as Gloriying in the Cross, which was once the *Scandal* of the World. Let us lay hold on the Merits of his Death, and apply its Virtues to our selves. But then let us not sit down, and do no more, and go no farther, than such a general Affiance in his Redemption, or bold Application of his Merits to our selves.

Let us adore his ever-blessed Name without ceasing. Let us affectionately perform all the public Duties of his Worship, and Practise. But let us not think it enough, only to obserye the public Part of them. For although all true Christians are bound to do that, yet even Hypocrites may counterfeit it.

Let us call him Lord, according to the ir-reprovable Use, and Institutions of our own Church : according to the Primitive Soundness of its Faith, and Sacraments ; the Apostolical Antiquity of its Ministry and Government ; the Catholic, and Truly-Christian Extent of its Charity ; the intelligible, decent, and Spiritual Manner of its Devotions.

In all these, let us continue unmoveably firm against the manifold Corruptions of its

Adver-

Adversaries. Yet let us not only employ our Time and Thoughts, to oppose them in Words, but to adorn this by our Works. Let us remember that Religion consists not only in Negative, but also in Affirmative Duties; not so much in Censuring others for what they say, or do ill, as in saying, and doing well our selves; not so much in Discovering the Errors of other Churches, as in Believing the Truths, and obeying the Rules of our own Church.

Let us cherish in our Souls a constant and stable Belief in the Divine Promises, and Truths. But let us not set up our Rest in a naked unactive Belief. For not only Hypocrites, but the Devils themselves may have some kind of Faith. 'Tis said, *the Devil's believe*. But it is never said, they wrought any good Work. Faith they may have in some sort; Real Goodness they cannot have in any. And what it is easie for the Devils themselves to attain to, is it not also possible for them to make even wicked Men to imitate?

But let us expect to be saved only by the Way, which Christ himself has appointed: by a particular Trust in his Atonement, and also, in some Sense, by our own Actions of Humility, and Charity; by his Sufferings, and also, in some Sense, by our own Obedience. In a very slender Sense indeed it is our own. The E-

vi of it is too truly ours: the Good is entirely our Saviours; though in his most gracious Interpretation, he permits us to call it ours.

There is no question, but he has sufficiently wrought out our Salvation for us. Yet we too are expressly commanded to work out our Salvation. In what manner are we to work? *with fear, and trembling;* which allows no Place for ill-grounded Assurance, or presumptuous Security. For what reason are we to work? It follows, *for it is God that works in us both to will, and to do.* We are to work, because God works: for which very Pretence, too many have thought that they need not work at all. *God works in us, both the Will and the Deed.* What then remains for us to work? Yes, very much. His freest Grace is not inconsistent with our Performance of the least of our Duties; rather it is the most powerful Argument to awaken us to our Duty.

He has done all for us. And the more he has done, the more ought we to do. It is confessed, we can do nothing, that will merit any thing. But we ought to do all in Obedience, and Gratitude: and the more so, because Christ himself has provided, that we shall need no other Merit but his.

And is not the whole Word of God full of Exhortations to such a kind of fruitful Religion

*Philip. 2.
12.*

on

on? Not only the positive Precepts, but the very Similitudes of it are enough to inform us, which is the true Holiness, that God will accept and reward. For throughout the Gospel, a Christian Life is seldom compared to any Art meerly contemplative; never to any idle, or useless Course of Living; but often to Travelling, to Husbandry, to Digging in a Vineyard, to Plowing and Sowing, to Building, to a Warfare, and the like: All of them Ways of Life, that consist not in meer Speculation, or Talking and Professing, but in Practise, and industrious Pains: all of them laborious Callings, and profitable not only to themselves, but to the World in general.

Those Joys of Heaven, to which we all aspire, and which as many of us as are wise will provide for, are often called in Scripture a *Rest from our Labours*, the *Prize of our high Calling*, the *End of our Race*, and the like. And what does all this teach us, but that in this Life we should Labour, and with fervent Contention, with indefatigable Ambition strive, and run in the Ways of Gods Commandments?

Consider, I beseech you, what are the two great Pleas to the Kingdom of Heaven, recorded in the Gospel, whereof our Lord Christ himself will reject the one, and allow the other at the Day of Judgment?

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What Plea will he reject? In the Words
 v. 22. next after my Text, it is written, *Many will say to me in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not* — By the way here also these Hypocrites did twice repeat this Word of Respect, saying, *Lord, Lord*: Whereas I do not remember, that his true Disciples did any where salute him more than singly Lord, or Master. An Hypocrite will be sure to say enough, rather too much than too little, and over-saying, nay, over-doing is a quite different thing from saying, or doing well. But — *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not Prophesied in thy Name? and in thy Name have cast out Devils? and in thy Name done many wonderful things?* But then says he, *I will profess to them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work Iniquity.* Ye that work Iniquity. We do not find he denies, that they had those extraordinary Abilities: but we do find, they were of no Consideration with him, because their ordinary Works were Evil.

That is the Plea he will refuse; what will he approve? In St. Matth. 25. 'tis said, *That when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all Nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his*

his sheep from the goates ; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand ; but the goates on the left. Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.

In so solemn an Appearance of God, Angels, and Men ; in so great an Expectation, what is the Cause of this most gracious Invitation ? What the Ground of their Title to this most Glorious Inheritance ? It presently follows. For, says he, *I was hungred, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye cloathed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*

They really had done all this in our Saviours sense. But so far were they from an undue confidence of deserving Heaven by it, that they doubted, they feared they had not done it. *Lord, say they, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee ? or thirsty, and gave thee drink ? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in ? or naked, and clothed thee ? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ?* He pities their fears, he clears up their doubts : He most mercifully Answers, *Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it to me.*

Thus,

Thus, you perceive, whilst even Supernatural Gifts alone may be defective ; whilst even the power of Miracles it self will not serve the turn ; the honest, and plain Actions of Piety, and Charity, performed to the least Member of our Lords Mystical Body, for his sake, have a true and undoubted Title to Salvation.

And if without *doing* this, and whatever else our Saviour has said, the very prophesying of things to come, the casting out of Devils, the doing many wonderful things, and all this in Christs Name, are not sufficient, what then is a meer verbal repeating of his Name, or a bare approbation of, and consent to his Doctrin, without *doing* what he has said ?

Wherefore, that our claim may be sure to that Everlasting Kingdom, let us imitate his Example, and obey his Gospel, in not omitting the professing part of Religion ; but yet in preferring the believing, and the practising part far before it. Let us *call him Lord*, but chiefly let us *do the things he has said* : Not only by *saying to him Lord*, but by *doing the Will of his Father*, let us strive to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Of which, I beseech Almighty God, to make us all partakers. *Amen.*